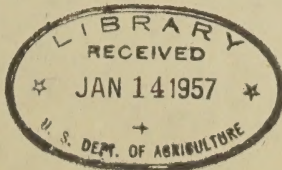


SOME EARLY PRINCIPLES AND MOTIVATIONS GUIDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 4-H CLUB WORK

Compiled by E. W. Aiton, Director
4-H Club and YMW Programs

1. Equal Dignity and Status for Rural Youth. Fifty years ago one might have observed distinct differences between average rural boys and girls and their city cousins. 4-H education, recreation, recognition, tours, trips, club and community activities were designed to help equalize the opportunities and the development of rural young people.
2. The Club Idea. In a democracy, group thought, activity, and cooperation are of fundamental importance. Learning proper knowledge, skills, and attitudes in this direction at an early age is basic to successful citizenship. There are over 87,000 4-H Clubs. They are found in every agricultural county. There are no dues or fees except as members may vote them for local use. Membership is on a nonpolitical, nondenominational basis. All races take part. In early days the idea of a club or a meeting which belonged to and was run by boys and girls was startling indeed.
3. Coeducational Activity. Boys and girls have natural propinquities. Their soundest spiritual and mental growth depends upon development of proper attitudes toward each other. This is most easily achieved in a coeducational atmosphere. Many early 4-H leaders risked or endured the criticisms of skeptics by holding coeducational club meetings, tours, educational trips and even overnight camps.
4. Development of Family Partnerships. The paternalistic system needed to be replaced by the family council table. Now it's "We and Ours" instead of "Papa's and Mama's." A start toward farm or property ownership at an early age speeds the attainment and insures the tradition of the family-type farm.
5. Dignity and Value of Work. By glorifying and glamourizing work habits and the results of productive effort, the 4-H program aims to help instill constructive values and sound attitudes into the minds of millions of young people.
6. Ownership. Personal pride, satisfactions, and incentives for growth and expansion results from individual ownership of property.
7. Youth Teach Adults. Because they are less rigid in their ways, youth can "show the way" to improvements by adults. Strong parental love and a desire for progress in their children frequently result in the 4-H member trying out a new improved practice first; the parent observes and follows it later, often unaware of how it happened.



8. Learning by Doing. With the home, farm, and family as a laboratory, 4-H pioneered in the application of "learning by living" principles to practice. This idea serves as an incentive and "transfer medium" for the learning process.

9. Learning Through Projects or Small Work Units. Every 4-H member carries a practical demonstration project which is within his ability, stimulating to his interest and of economic or social importance. It is not "make-believe."

10. Volunteer Local Leadership. The 4-H Club belongs to the families and to the community. The officers are young people elected from and by the club. Adult local leaders volunteer their help.

11. A vocational Program. In addition to information of a strictly technical agricultural and home economics nature, youth 10 to 21 years of age are helped with their problem of:

- a. Shall I be a farmer or farm homemaker?
- b. How shall I prepare for my chosen vocation?
- c. Personal adjustments to life.
- d. Health, safety, conservation, recreation, and community life.

12. Competition. An earnest struggle for survival and recognition may be realistic in a competitive society. Individual competitions have been stressed in 4-H Club work in the past. Perhaps the values of group competition and intrinsic motivations as a substitute for individual awards and contests have been underestimated and underdeveloped.

